

marten

Nature's Call

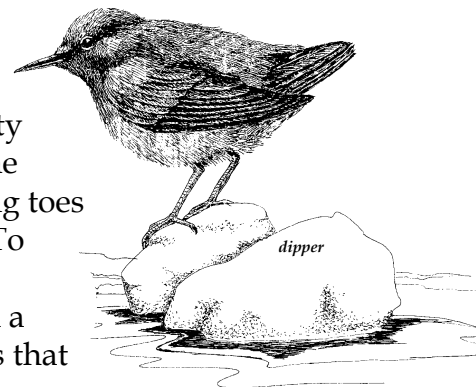
An Activity Newsletter for Kids by Utah's Project WILD--Spring 1996



morels

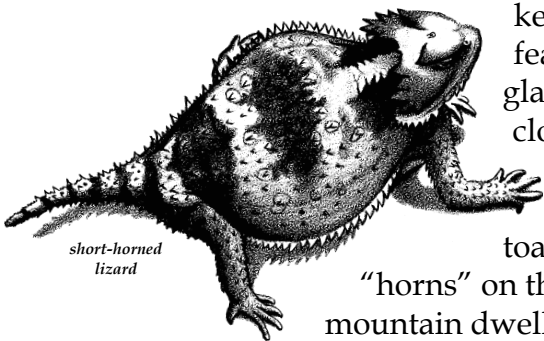
Most of Utah is a desert. But stretching above the desert are mountains. These tall mountains reach up into the clouds where snow and rain fall. The precious water and cooler temperatures allow forests and meadows to grow. Aspen, spruce, pine, oak and many other trees cover Utah's mountains. These trees provide habitat for many wild animals. Some of them are described below.

The amazing dipper makes its home near Utah's mountain streams. This unusual, gray-colored songbird is known for its ability to dive to the bottom of swift streams to feed on aquatic insects. The dipper propels itself through the water with its wings. It uses strong toes



dipper

to hold onto the bottom for up to 30 seconds. To keep warm and dry, the dipper has dense feathers that are waterproofed with oil from a gland near its tail. The dipper also has scales that close its nostrils when it is under water!



short-horned
lizard

Short-horned lizards, are sometimes called "horny toads." These reptiles get their name from the sharp spines or "horns" on their heads and backs. The short-horned lizard is a mountain dweller. It lives in forests at elevations up to 11,000 feet. It is difficult for reptiles to stay warm in such cold places. So, you will often see this lizard basking in the sun. Once warmed, short-horned lizards hunt for their favorite meal, ants. They will eat 70-100 ants a day!

Flying squirrels don't really fly, but glide from tree to tree. Their "flight" begins with a leap from high up in a tree. A cape of fur stretches between their wrists and ankles. This fur forms a parachute that allows them to glide through the air. They turn by changing their leg and tail positions. Flying squirrels can glide up to 150 feet! You rarely see flying squirrels because they're active at night. They feed upon many things in the forest such as fungi, seeds and insects. Hawks, owls and martens try to capture these night-flying critters.

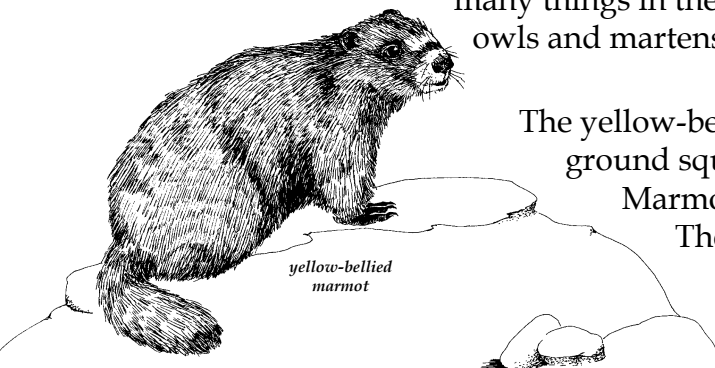


flying
squirrel

The yellow-bellied marmot is one of North America's largest ground squirrels. It is two feet tall, and weighs 5-10 pounds.

Marmots make their homes in rocky places in the mountains.

The rocks protect the marmots from predators such as eagles and coyotes. In the summer, marmots feed on a variety of grasses and flowers. During the fall, they will eat many seeds to put on enough fat to last their long winter hibernation.



yellow-bellied
marmot

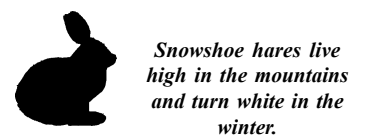
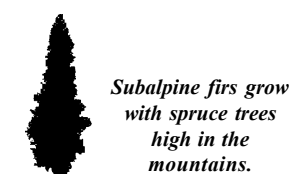
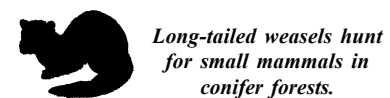
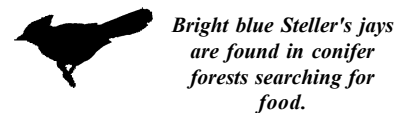
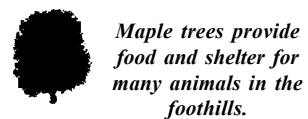
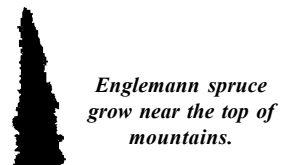
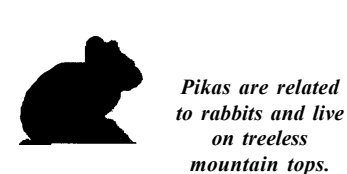
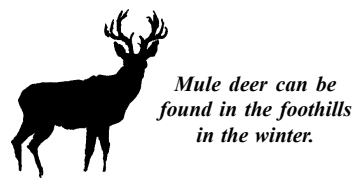
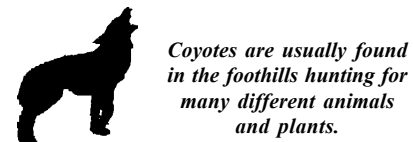
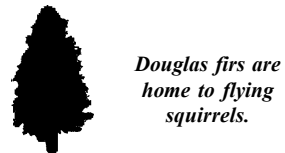
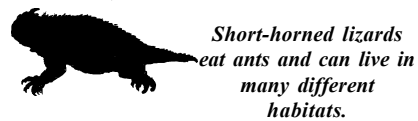
Turn the page and enter the mountain habitats of Utah!!!

Mountain Habitats...

high above the rest!!

Since it is cool and wet in the mountains you will find all kinds of plants and animals there. Thick forests of conifer trees grow in the mountains. Conifers are trees that produce seeds inside of cones. Animals such as the flying squirrel are found living in these forests. Once you get near the tops of the tallest mountains it is so cold and windy that trees cannot grow. But, even though it is cold and windy the pika can live there.

Look at the plants and animals on this page. They need a place to live. Help them find a home. Draw in the plants and animals in a place they might like to live.



Complete this mountain food web. Write the name of the animal in the blanks below each box: **dipper, goshawk, caddis fly larva, marten, coyote, flying squirrel, fungi, trout, short-horned lizard, ant.** Starting with the sun, follow the flow of energy. Color the sun and arrows **red**. Now, color the boxes and circles. **Green** is for producers. **Blue** is for consumers. **Yellow** is for decomposers.

